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ABSTRACT

Revised general education (GE) curricula at two community colleges are described in an effort to illustrate the outcomes of a "telic" curriculum revision based on: (1) the collective identification of the purposes of GE by an institution's faculty, and (2) the design of a GE curriculum which reconciles those identified purposes with the needs and preferences of non-traditional students. The report first discusses the desirability of curriculum reform based on institutional self-evaluation, rather than on simple comparisons with other colleges, and then examines the problems involved in matching curriculum design with the diverse student bodies associated with open enrollment. This is followed by a description of the GE curriculum developed at Miami-Dade Community College to further its commitment to open enrollment and, at the same time, to meet external demands for career-oriented courses, increased emphasis on basic skills, and higher academic standards. This section also includes an examination of student assessment procedures used to determine the appropriate balance between core courses and basic skills courses. Finally, the report describes the revised GE curriculum developed at Cedar Valley College (Texas) to support the college's commitment to education for citizenship through a sequence of "Skills for Living" courses stressing the individual's role and responsibility in society. (JP)

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General Education in the Community College:

A Search for Purpose

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General Education in the Community College:

A Search for Purpose

The Carnegie Foundation (1977) has described general education in America's colleges as "an idea in distress"; for the community college it may be more appropriate to describe general education as an idea under stress. More precisely, general education programs in community colleges can best be understood as the resolution of the conflicts inherent within two curriculum dilemmas: the dilemma of purpose and the dilemma of congruence.

The Dilemma of Purpose: Three Concepts

The dilemma of purpose for general education programs is common to community colleges, four year colleges and to universities, but since community colleges offer primarily lower division courses and occupational programs, the general education program plays a particularly important role in their total curriculum The comprehensive community college is a recent development, and perhaps because of this newness it has yet to find its own clear direction and purpose. The curriculum of the comprehensive community college derives its substance from an upward extension of the comprehensive high school but derives its curriculum form and its faculty organization from higher education. The resulting confusion of general curriculum direction is compounded by the inability of either the secondary schools or higher education to develop a clear consensus on the purpose of general education. Thus it is not surprising that the community colleges find general education an awkward and imprecise curriculum area. But this need not be so. A judicious shift in emphasis from concern for the purpose of general education to concern for the process of developing institutional statements of purpose for

general education holds real promise.

Many statements describing general education exist; from the cornucopia on contents available, three seem reasonably representative and particularly useful. Alfred North Whitehead (1929) declared the aim of education to be producing people "-who possess both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction" (p. 1) where culture is a "sense of style" based upon "the art of the utilization of knowledge" (p. 6) and taught through the general education componenet of the curriculum. Ellen Goodman (1978) has expressed her concept of a minimal general education program as the knowledge and instinct to action embodied in four courses: Flexibility 196, Decisionmaking (a required senior course), Change Ia, and Social Action. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching commissioned Missions of the College Curriculum (1977) in an effort to look at purpose in the total college curriculum. That book defines general education as

> -that part of the undergraduate curriculum that permits....an institution to make a unique contribution to the education of its students.
> (p. 85) (underlining added)

The key emphasis in the Carnegie conception of general education is upon the uniqueness, not the similarity, of the contribution each institution strives to make upon its students.

The Dilemma of Purpose: A Focus on Process

The dilemma of purpose in general education is illustrated by the divergent views of Whitehead, Goodman, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, yet these views also illustrate a potential for reconciliation.

Both Whitehead and Goodman discuss general education in terms of what students become. For Whitehead educated students are able to utilize knowledge as part of their being in the world, and for Goodman they are able to use knowledge to affect their world through choice, decision, and action. The Carnegie publication does not stress student outcomes; it stresses the institutional role in a process that leads to student involvement in a curriculum designed to promote certain outcomes for students. And that institutional role seems a most promising place to begin the search for reconciliation.

Gerald Grant and David Reisman (1978) developed the very useful concept of "telic" reform of curriculum in their study The Perpetual Dream: Reform and Experimentation in the American College. They found the only lasting curriculum reforms to be "telic" reforms: reforms which embodied "a significantly different conception of the goals of undergraduate education." (p. 17) A "telic" reform is more than just a new concept, however. It requires leadership from a strong president or faculty to generate an institution-wide commitment to curriculum reform, and it involves the development of a process for institution-wide involvement in curriculum reform. Thus a telic curriculum reform would involve strong leadership and a process involving a total faculty and administration in a struggle to identify what they collectively believe is the purposes of general education for their institution and then to design a curriculum to accomplish that purpose. As both concept and process, telic reform holds promise for meaningful curriculum reform for general education rather than the typical cut and paste catalog reshuffling.

There are several encouraging examples of telic reform. Among four year colleges notable examples are the University of Chicago under Hutchins, Columbia as reported by David Bell, Wisconsin under Meiklejohn, and St. Johns under

Buchanan. Two year colleges have a shorter history, but some notable examples can be drawn from public community colleges. In the late forties, Stevens College, a private junior college in Columbia, Missouri, did a complete restructuring of its general education program (Reynolds, 1969). Among public community colleges, Miami-Dade Community College has just completed a reformulation of its general education program that involved all four of its campuses. Cedar Valley College, a single college of the multi-college Dallas County Community College District, has recently instituted a general education reformulation that may be adapted by its sister campuses. And Los Medanos College of the Contra Casta Community College District of California has implemented a single college telic reform.

The Dilemma of Congruence: The Student and The Curriculum

Students, like curricula, do not come in neat packages. Institutions must attempt to find congruence or appropriate fit between their students and their curriculum. As curricula have become more diverse and more diffused, so have students become more diverse and thus contributed to the difficulty of achieving an appropriate fit between curriculum and student. Once a community college has defined its own purpose and form for general education, the college must face the difficulties posed by its student body. Community college students are increasingly unlike "traditional" college students or even Cross's "new students." (1974) Today students are increasingly older, part-time, employed, and often lacking in traditional academic skills. The impact of this student body may be graphically represented by classifying students by degree plans.

Figure 1. Students Classified By Status And Degree Plans

Student Status	Degree Plans: Degree or Certificate Program	Degree Plans: No Program
Part-time	I	III
Full-time	II	IV

Fifty-five (55) percent of community college students nationally are part-time; forty-five (45) percent are full-time (Drake, 1977). There is no clear data concerning the split between those enrolled in degree or certificate programs and those unclassified because they are not in degree or certificate programs. However, the available data suggests it would be reasonable to estimate that no more than fifty-five (55) percent of all students are in degree or certificate programs while approximately forty-five (45) percent of all community college students are not enrolled in a degree or a certificate program. (Virginia, 1975) Thus, a reasonable estimate is that the largest single cluster of all enrolled students, about 30%, are part-time students in degree or certificate programs (cell I, Figure 1); the next largest clusters, about 25% each, are full-time students in degree programs (cell II) and part-time students not in degree programs (cell III). The smallest student cluster is full-time students not in programs (cell IV).

The significance of this classification of student status by degree plans lies in its relationship with institutional control over a students actual program of studies. Control is highest where a student is pursuing a degree or certificate with a stated curriculum, and where a student can be tested

or monitored for basic academic skills. These conditions apply for cell II only. Institutional control is reduced when students are pursuing a program on a part-time basis and will take courses for convenience instead of in the planned sequences in which they are offered. Control is lowest when the student is not enrolled in a program, not held to taking courses in sequence, and not forced to test or be screened for basic skills (cells III and IV). On this dimension, institutional control over the student program of study is strong only in cell II with about twenty-five percent of the students, is weaker in cell I with about thirty percent of the students, and weakest in cells III and IV with about forty-five percent of the students.

This disjuncture between students and patterns of control over curriculum is a major dilemma for the community college. The dilemma is exacerbated by the community college's large concentration of adult student who desire personal control instead of institutional control over their choice of courses and over their curriculum. And the dilemma is further compounded by adult's efforts to use general education programs to link their considerable life and work experience to theoretical formulations from the discipline-related courses while younger student in the same curriculum are still working on acquiring basic factual material and are not ready to integrate practical and theoretical learning. (Cross, 1978)

Yet despite these dilemmas, progress in general education reform can and has been made. Miami-Dade and Cedar Valley College have utilized telic reform to develop general education programs designed to reflect their institutions concept of the purpose of general education and to accomodate the difficulties of appropriate fit with their student populations.

The Miami-Dade Experience

Miami-Dade Community College has initiated a telic reform of its general education program. Like many community colleges, when it was founded in 1960 Miami-Dade adopted a university model for its genral education program. The typical university model, however, was ususally designed for students who had met entrance requirements. Since that time, Miami-Dade has made some changes in its general education requirements, but these have been primarily reductions in the number of required courses and content revision in the existing courses.

The new general education program which the college has recently adopted resulted from both external and internal pressures for a renewal in the focus and content of general education. The external pressures, which concern the dilemma of purpose mentioned earlier, concerned three serious issues--the issue of vocational education, the basic skills issue, and the issue of academic quality. The internal pressure, related to the dilemma of consequences, was brought on by the dramatic change in the college's student population.

The first external pressure, the movement to emphasize career training and to produce specialists, has forced administrators and faculty to rethink the purpose of a general education. All are aware of the government and public concern that colleges graduate students with skills which prepare them to compete in the labor market. All have encountered proposals to increase specialized courses in career and transfer programs at the expense of the broader general education courses. Miami-Dade's response to this pressure was to reaffirm the priority and value of general education and to recommend a substantial increase in the general education requirements for students pursuing an

Associate in Scieñe degree, even though most of the A. S. programs had little room for additional credits.

The broad public concern about the basic skills deficiences of students at every educational level was the second external pressure. Every college can describe the effects of the decline in reading, writing and computational skills on its instructional programs. As Miami-Dade faculty reviewed its general education program, no other concern was voiced so strongly and so universally. Regardless of what other changes the college made in the general education program, faculty made it clear that greater success in dealing with basic skills problem was essential.

The third pressure, to improve the quality of the educational program, is related to the problem of students' basic skills deficiencies. Concern is expressed, both within and from outside our institutions, about inflated grades, graduates who lack necessary skills, and watered-down curricula. The quality issue, however, is not simple. We all want high quality, but the appropriate measures of quality--whether they be grade point averages, graduation rates, standardized test scores, attainment of objectives or competencies, success in subsequent university work, or successful job placement--are not clear.

The greatest pressure on Miami-Dade to revise its general education program, however, was an internal one brought on by the significant increase in the diversity of its students. Like many community colleges, Miami-Dade experienced rapid, large growth. Beginning with 1,338 credit students in 1960, the college's term enrollment had risen to over 28,000 by 1970. Credit enrollment in the fall term, 1978 was 43,624, and total enrollment, including continuing education students, was 58,339. This growth in itself placed

substantial pressure on the college's resources. In addition, the greatest proportion of this growth was among minority students, especially Black and Hispanic students, many of whom were economically disadvantaged. Black students now total 6,996, 18% of the student population. There are 14,863 Hispanic students, or 38%. With regard to income levels, in 1977-78 12,662 students qualified for BEOG grants totaling over $9,000,000. Under the new BEOG criteria as many as 73% of Miami-Dade's students may be eligible for federal assistance. The diversity of this tri-ethnic population creates serious teaching problems for instructors. The basic skills deficiencies of many of these students simply coumpounds the problem. At Miami-Dade North Campus, of 7,000 entering students in 1977, 4,900 or 70% were diagnosed as having deficiencies in reading, writing and/or math and in need of special assistance and programs to overcome their problem.

The impact of this situation has led many fauclty to feel that they cannot cope with the problem of diversity. Many see the only sulution to be the closing of the "open door." Others would have the college reinstitute pre-college programs for students to complete before taking the so-called "regular' courses.

While recognizing the gravity of the situation and the extent of the problem, Miami-Dade remained firm in its commitment to provide access to all members of the community. Although the college has always sought to develop new programs to meet new community needs, to experiment with new delivery systems, to apply technology to improve the instructional management process, and to promote faculty development, the present needs require a substantial renewal of its general education curriculum and the addition of considerable support services.

Before describing specific components of Miami-Dade's new general education program, the underlying logic, not only for the general education program, but also for the college's basic skills requirements and new standards of academic progress should be emphasized. The logic of the program is as important as its collective features. The following major concerns were fundamental to the implementation logic:

(1) The student body is becoming increasingly diverse in all characteristics; thus, the principal teaching/learning concern for the next decade must be individualization.

(2) Increasingly, faculty feel that the expanding diversity of their students, particularly the great number with poor reading, writing, and computational skills, places them in a position where both they and the students have a limited chance of success.

(3) There is ever-growing dissatisfaction throughout the country with students' lack of ability in basic skills at all levels of education.

(4) The data available indicates that many students are aware of their own weaknesses in these areas and want help. They are also seeking more direction concerning their educational and career goals.

(5) There is little evidence to suggest that the income of institutions can be expected to grow at a rate that would permit more expensive practices to be used throughout the instructional program. A principal task for the future is that of providing for increased student diversity while maintaining present, or, perhaps even lower, per-student costs.

Miami-Dade's program provides that all students will be assessed on admission. If they have serious basic skills deficiencies, they will be

advised to enroll and continue to enroll in developmental programs, probably in open-laboratory settings, until minimal competencies have been achieved. The students must demonstrate basic computational skills in order to graduate, and basic reading and writing skills in order to enroll in the communications course required for all students, both in transfer and occupational programs.

After admission, students will ordinarily begin to take some of the new required general education courses. The college has adopted a general education core of five interrelated courses which are required of all degree-seeking students. These courses, designed for the very heterogeneous student body, will directly address the college's general education goals. These core courses, which should contribute to the quality and value of the lives of the students, are not intended as the first step in a discipline, or as the beginning of a major.

Since the enrollments in these courses will be very large, perhaps 20,000 students a year, the college can justify the allocation of funds to develop whatever resources are necessary to enable faculty to cope successfully with the diverse student body. These resources should also foster direct relationships between the general education core and the basic skills program. Care will be taken that print materials have appropriate reading levels. In addition, a computerized instructional management system will be developed for each core course for those instructors who may wish to make use of it.

For those students with basic skills deficiencies, the important role of the general education core will be to support the efforts of the developmental programs. Some students with very severe problems may be advised not

to enroll in other courses until they have made progress on their deficiencies. Other students, with less severe deficiencies but still needing developmental work, may be advised that they might enroll for one or more of the core courses while working to improve their basic skills. The expectation is that by the time students with deficiencies have completed both developmental work at the basic skills centers, and the core courses, they will have achieved sufficient skills to permit them to be successful in more traditional discipline courses that follow.

The second level of the general education program contains distribution courses that are also designed to meet the general education goals. A limited selection will be offered in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences. In these courses, students will explore in greater depth individual disciplines to complement the breadth of the core courses.

To better monitor the students' progress and success in their academic work, the college has also adopted new standards of academic progress. The primary purpose of these new standards is to enable the college to provide assistance for students with academic difficulties earlier in their academic careers. A primary component of this monitoring system is a computerized academic alert system which has already been implemented for all first-time-in-college students. About the middle of the term, the students receive computerized progress reports on their performance and attendance in each of their classes. In addition, these reports, correlated with ten other factors, give each student individualized directions for receiving appropriate advisement and assistance when they are needed. Other data in the file include the student's course load, program of study, faculty advisor, native language, campus or outreach center, age, physical limitations, whether the individual student is an international student or is receiving veteran's benefits, and

test scores from the reading, writing and math assessments. During the 1978 fall term, 9,706 students received computer-generated letters that gave them progress reports for their classes and directed them to appropriate advisors, like the student's previous advisor, a mature student advisor, an advisor for the handicapped, a veteran's advisor, or an advisor from the basic skills developmental area. Of these nearly 10,000 students, 4,173, or 43% were advised that they needed improvement in one or more of their courses, and 2,038, or 21%, were cautioned about their poor attendance. This system will enable the college to get much clearer information about correlations between attendance and academic success; between reading, writing and math assessment scores and academic success; and the success of students in special categories, like those receiving veteran's benefits, international students, physically handicapped students, and older students.

The other aspect of the standards of academic progress is the placing of specific restrictions on students who fail to maintain standards in two areas: their gradepoint average and their successful completion of at least half the credits for which they register. The categories of academic warning and academic probation use a credit load restriction as a primary means for assisting the students to improve their performance. Students on probation not only have their load restricted, but also must register for at least three credits in a prescribed program of intervention, like work in the basic skills labs, a course in career planning, a course in study skills, or another counseling program, while maintaining a 2.0 term average.

Miami-Dade is attempting, therefore, to integrate programs in basic skills, general education, academic and career counseling, and academic standards in order to individualize both counseling and instruction to deal with its large and diverse population. These new programs involve a fundamental

reassessment of the college's capability to achieve its mission and a commitment to develop the systems and the resources needed to enable faculty and students to successfully achieve their objectives.

The Cedar Valley Experience

Today's community colleges express desirable and idealistic general education goals in their mission statements. These same goals have been espoused by community colleges for several decades. Although the mission statements have not altered over the years, the perception of general education and its role in the community college is changing across the country. The background for this shift provides a context for projects such as those recently undertaken by Miami-Dade and the Dallas County Community College Districts.

Historically, general education has included major elements of the classical "liberal education." It has been approached through the study of Western civilizaiton, study of the classics, or through survey courses (Monroe, 1972). For universities, such content and methodology long seemed appropriate and effective. But for "democracy's college," the traditional elements of liberal education, firmly rooted in a system of educational elitism, proved philosophically discomfiting and realistically impractiable. This discomfiture with the liberal education model led to the typical disregard for general education, and created the need for general education models suitable for the contemporary community college.

General Education for Effective Living

Throughout its American evolution, general education has included preparation for citizenship as a central function. But only recently have community colleges begun to focus clearly upon this aspect of general education as an imperative for curriculum reform. Goodman's (1978) definition of

general education is a somewhat pithier version of Thornton's 1956 assertion that general education should

> afford young people more effective preparation for the responsibilities which they share in common as citizens in a free society and for wholesome and creative participation in a wide range of life activities. (p. 65)

And these authors are surely in the debt of writers and thinkers of the 1940's, including Truman's Commission on Higher Education and the outstanding curriculum committee that forged the seminal Harvard "Red Book" (1945). This content, then, is certainly not new to general education. It has its origins in the Greek republic, and can trace a proud history through the centuries. But the reawakening of the community colleges to the importance of this focus upon values, attitudes and life skills is a fledgling national movement.

The Dallas County Community College District Policy and Procedures Manual speaks to general education for citizenship by stating that a central mission is "to help students equip themselves for effective living and for responsible citizenship in a rapidly changing local, state, national, and world community." (1977, policy II/A) This mission has not been previously addressed by a set of general education requirements; none exist in the District. Several courses are required for receipt of the A.A. degree; A.A.S. and certificate programs have no common required courses. The new importance granted to general education is reflected in the Dallas County Community College District, as elsewhere, by increased attention to the development of a set of educational outcomes relevant to the goals of "effective living and responsible citizenship."

Skills for Living

In 1977, the District began a systematic identification of values, attitudes, and skills for life enrichment as an integral part of the college curriculum. These educational outcomes were labeled "Skills for Living,"

defined as those skills that enable individuals to evaluate and adjust to everyday personal and social situations in ways beneficial to the individual and/or society. They indicate facility in dealing effectively with everyday crises, choices, or dilemmas which must be faced in a complex society. Rather than attending to "basic skills" as a part of the Skills for Living model, the life skills were predicated upon an understanding of the traditional fundamentals--the "Three R's."

Skills for Living are organized into three broad and somewhat indistinct categories, each consisting of several competency areas. The first category, which is termed "Relationships," includes the following competency areas: Living with the Developing Self; Living with Others; and Living with Environments. This category is based upon the assumption that individual fulfillment and social responsibility are achieved in part through the realization of one's unique sense of self, and through the responsible acceptance of the interdependency of that self with others and with one's environment.

Individuals play three important economic and socio-political roles in their lifetimes: (1) as workers, they contribute to the production of goods and services; (2) as consumers, they use the results of that production; and (3) as citizens and community members, they influence economic and socio-political decisions. Thus the second competency category, "Roles and Functions," includes the following areas: Living as a Producer, Living as a Consumer; and Living in the Community.

The third category, "Orientations," is based upon the premise that an individual's approach to life situations is fundamental in whatever roles or relationships one is involved. A creative and futuristic approach to life provides for individual growth and a greater readiness to accommodate change, and it can contribute to the development of a more dynamic and positive society.

Living Creatively and Living in the Future are competency areas included in this category.

Each competency area includes the assumptions upon which it is based, the goal to which it is directed, and a set of competency statements. The competency statements themselves are, purposely, somewhat general in order to allow for change and for some latitude in interpretation. For example, Living in the Community never specifies whether that community is local, state, national, or international, thus allowing the competencies themselves to be applied in a array of situations.

Skills for Living as Telic Reform

The process undertaken for the development and implementation of the Skills for Living model and the outcomes of this process suggest that the project might indeed be an example of "telic reform." The initial Skills for Living document was developed at Cedar Valley College, one of the seven colleges that comprise the Dallas County Community College District. A committee with faculty and staff representatives from art, science, business, technology, health services, human development, physical education, library services, and history/government was selected by the vice-president of instruction, who served as an ad hoc committee member. Thus an array of discipline and service areas contributed to the project. The initial set of values, attitudes, and life skills developed by this committee was distributed to faculty, administrators, and selected staff from across the District.

A District-wide committee representing seven campuses and still another array of disciplines and interest was selected to review the responses to the initial document and to make revisions based on these responses. Their revised document is being reviewed systematically by District staff, students, and

community members. Further revisions will be made as needed after this survey, with the refined version then presented to representatives from area secondary schools and institutions of higher education. Certainly the document is not viewed as static, and will continue to be revised and refined as needed. But the basic framework and directional goals have seemed, thus far, to stand up well under the scrutiny of many critical eyes.

The planned implementation of Skills for Living into the curriculum of the Dallas County Community College District does not involve a "typical cut and paste catalog reshuffling," but requires integration of the values, attitudes, and skills throughout the existing curriculum and into the design of all new courses and programs. Cedar Valley College instructors are beginning the identification of Skills for Living that are taught in existing courses, and some are revising course objectives to more directly reflect the values, attitudes, and life skills set forth in the document.

The identification of life skills in existing courses and the development of new courses are clearly recognizable curriculum decisions. But an exciting aspect of Skills for Living as telic curriculum reform is its potential for providing a clear focus and framework for many activities that are normally considered extra-curricular, such as student activities, guest performances, learning resources programs, health services, and the like. Reference to Skills for Living provides a clear indication of the direct educational benefits of such activities.

Faculty members have suggested that an orientation course and a capstone course that emphasize Skills for Living should be developed. Among other functions, the orientation course would introduce students to the Skills for

Living concept and assist them in the development of an educational plan to assure that all the skills are addressed. The proposed capstone course would enable students to synthesize their experiences. These ideas are under consideration as revisions in the District human development curriculum.

The content of Skills for Living is certainly not innovative, but the renewed emphasis upon education for citizenship and effective living in the community college setting is a recent occurrence. The Skills for Living content reflects the thinking of educators of the past several decades. Phrases from the Harvard "Red Book" (1945) echo through Skills for Living. The curriculum revisionists at Mars Hill, Miami-Dade, Alverno, and Los Medanos will certainly recognize similarities to their own programs as they examine the basic values, attitudes, and life skills expoused in Skills for Living. This prepetition is reassuring rather than disheartening, for it suggests that professional educators, thinking independently of each other, have a measure of consensus in this critical curriculum domain.

The Dallas attempt to develop Skills for Living by integration of skills throughout the curriculum rather than through a core curriculum or through an interdisciplinary approach, presents many obstacles for curriculum planners. But the integration technique offers special benefits to those students who are either part-time or who are not pursuing specific degrees or programs. Thus some solution of the previously mentioned dilemma of congruence is provided.

What are the reasons for the current emphasis upon general education in the community colleges? These responses might suffice: "the staggering expansion of knowledge," "the growth of the educational system with its maze of stages, functions, and kinds of institutions," and "the ever-growing complexity of society itself." The reasons sound contemporary, but they comprise

a major part of the rationale for the work of the general education reformers who developed the Harvard revisions of 1945. When these same writers described the task of the secondary schools in developing general education curricula, they might well have been describing the role of the modern community college. This segment of education, they asserted, faces "the incomparably difficult task of meeting, in ways which they severally respect and will respond to, masses of students of every conceivable shade of intelligence, background, means, interest, and expectations" (Harvard, 1945).

The Dallas County Community College District believes that Skills for Living offers a viable way to undertake this Herculean task. Certainly the new emphasis upon values, attitudes, and life skills within "democracy's college" is not only justified, but long overdue. The models currently being explored provide promise for the future of general education in the community college

Conclusion

General education has a role in the community colleges. Whether the emphasis in any one institution falls upon the advanced learning skills function, the distribution function forcing students to study the mainstreams of thought and interpretation on the human condition, or the integration of learning on the capstone model of our earliest colleges, the primacy of general education in many forms remains a reality in the curriculum of the community college. The mechanism for implementing a general education program is clear-cut: core courses, distribution requirements, and/or patterns of electives in some combination. What is less clearcut is the purpose behind general education. But if the emphasis is shifted from finding the one true purpose for general education for all institutions to using a process to develop each

institutions perception of the appropriate purpose for general education for that institution, faculty, and student body, then a telic reformulation may occur with increased likelihood for meaningful and lasting change.

Change to insure a meaningful general education program is of great institutional importance because

> General education is that part of the undergraduate curriculum that permits...an institution to make a unique contribution to the education of its students. (Carnegie, 85)

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